

## CUSTOMS OFFICIALS, SHIPOWNERS FINE-TUNE THE BLUE BELT PILOT



*Blue-belting ahead: Leendert Bal, Head of the Operations Department, welcomes the Blue Belt Correspondence and Advisory Group.*

The Blue Belt pilot project is about to set sail. Starting in May and lasting until the end of 2011, the project aims to promote the exchange of information about ships travelling between EU ports, as a tool to help the EU build a [single maritime transport space without barriers](#). The project involves all customs authorities along the EU coastline, and will see the participation of over 250 ships (called 'blue ships' in the project). The main outcome of the pilot project will be reports that are distributed, within an actionable timeframe, to the customs authority competent for a blue ship's ports of call. Supporting entities from industry in the project are an Advisory Group made of six shipping companies selected by [European Community Shipowners' Association \(ECSA\)](#) and the [World Shipping Council \(WSC\)](#). On the side of the customs authorities, cooperation is headed up via a Correspondence Group, including the customs of various Member States, together with representatives from the European Commission's [DG-TAXUD](#) and [DG-MOVE](#). On 15 March, pilot project stakeholders - customs, shipowners and EU Commission - were invited to Lisbon to thrash out some of the technical aspects and milestones of the pilot.

## CLEANSEANET 2 LIVE!

Since 2007, CleanSeaNet has been detecting and monitoring oil spills in European waters, and a second generation went online in February. The new service, based on a network of satellite receiving and data processing stations, improves the operational exchange with users in Member States. It provides a full vessel detection service, links to existing oil spill models, and as such improves the overall 'chain of evidence'. It helps users integrate data from multiple satellites in case of emergency situations, and links to the other EMSA operational services. Training and continuous customer support is being provided to all users to acquaint them with the second generation service.



The interface offers an end-to-end service to identify oil spills and polluters.

## PORTUGUESE STAFF VOLUNTEER FOR EU SCHOOLS PROJECT



The project [European Union for Volunteering 2011](#) prompted a group of Portuguese colleagues at EMSA to volunteer to present the Agency's activities at Lisbon schools with a 'European Club'. On 24 February colleagues gave up their free time to visit a first school in Lisbon. Students learned about EMSA's pollution response, ship safety and Maritime Support Services activities. The initiative will be continued at other Portuguese schools during 2011.

## DNV'S 'TRIALITY' CONCEPT EXPLAINED TO EMSA

On 23 February, EMSA staff attended a regular 'lunchtime meeting' with a special external guest: Tor E. Svensen, President of the [Det Norske Veritas \(DNV\)](#) classification society. The theme of the meeting was DNV's concept ship *Triality*, which is an LNG-powered VLCC without ballast which produces considerably reduced emissions. According to DNV, compared to a 'traditional' VLCC, the *Triality* will emit 34% less CO<sub>2</sub>, eliminate entirely the need for ballast water and the venting of cargo vapors, and use 25% less energy. Following the presentation, EMSA Executive Director Willem de Ruiter chaired a series of questions and answers, focusing on the safety, environmental claims of the pilot, and the viability of LNG as a bunker oil alternative in the wider world shipping fleet.



LNG propulsion is one of the key technologies proposed for the 'greening' of shipping.

## LRIT DC NOW HOSTED IN PORTUGAL

17 March marked an important milestone for EMSA's [Long Range Identification and Tracking](#) of ships (LRIT) activities. Starting from this date, the EU LRIT Data Centre has been hosted and operated at EMSA's premises. Following an initial period of operating the EU LRIT DC at the contractor's premises, [Collecte Localisation Satellite](#), in Toulouse, the system was successfully transferred to EMSA's premises, without any significant impact on the availability and performance of the service to end users. The EU LRIT DC is the biggest LRIT set-up of the international LRIT system, tracking over 8,800 ships of 38 participating countries and providing LRIT services to over 600 users. Coincidentally, on the same day the [IMO](#) confirmed that the transfer of operations of the International LRIT Data Exchange (IDE) testing environment (DevTest) from the US Coast Guard to EMSA has been satisfactorily completed, and it is now operated by EMSA. The LRIT IDE is the central communications node between LRIT Data Centres all over the world (more than 62 Data Centres are presently operational). This is the first step in the full transfer of IDE operations to EMSA. The second step - the transfer of the IDE Production environment - is scheduled for October of this year.



Not exactly photogenic, but powerful: the EMSA LRIT DC server in its new Portuguese home.

## ON THE EMSA WEBSITE

**EMSA documents:** Mid-term Report 2007-2009 on Marine Pollution Preparedness and Response Activities; Blue Belt Pilot Project - Information Brochure; SafeSeaNet Interface and Functionalities Control, 2nd Working Group.

**Recruitment:** IT software developer (deadline: 20/04); Seconded National Expert, Accident Investigation (deadline 20/04); Project Officer for Environmental Protection (deadline 29/04).

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